

Frequently Asked Questions About: Financial Aid for FKCE/ILP Staff

Basic Questions

Where can you file the Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA) online?

The FAFSA can be filed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov Students should get a PIN code for electronic submission as early as possible. To get a PIN code login to www.pin.ed.gov

Where does a student get information on the CSS Profile Application used by many private colleges?

You can find all about the CSS Profile at <http://profileonline.collegeboard.com/index.jsp> The online registration fee is \$5.00 with an \$18 fee per school.

How does a student submit a GPA verification on line?

The student will not submit it, the school will. The student should check with their high school counselor or college financial aid office to determine if the school submits GPAs electronically. If the school does not submit electronically, the student can complete the paper form, have the school complete their portion of the form, and mail it to the Commission.

Do all schools have the Student Aid Commission Grade Point Average Verification Form?

We automatically ship the GPA forms to all high schools. College financial aid offices will be very familiar with it and usually order the forms from us in bulk.

When calculating a student's financial need, would a college use a 12 month budget if student needed it?

Yes, schools have the flexibility of adjusting a student's budget to fit the student's needs.

We had heard that ILP Eligible Probation kids are not eligible for Chafee Grants. Is this true?

Students who are on probation are not automatically ineligible. This condition by itself does not disqualify them. However, any student who is in detention is not eligible because they must actually attend a school to receive benefits.

The Student Aid Commission relies upon the Department of Social Services to determine which students are or were ILP eligible between their 16th and 18th birthdays. Therefore, questions on issues such as this should be directed to their County Social Services Department/

Eligibility for the federal financial aid programs is not tied to criminal activity except for drug convictions. We suggest students who have had drug convictions complete the Drug Conviction Worksheet available online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/before013.htm>

When you mentioned the income ceilings for Cal Grants A, B and C independent students with dependents, does that mean a single parent with children or is it a married couple with children?

Independent students who have dependents other than a spouse use the higher income ceilings. Those who are single or married without other dependents use the lower ceilings.

You spent a good deal of time taking about independent status for Wards of the Court. Can you explain this again?

For federal and state financial aid purposes, a student's parents are expected to contribute towards the student's education until at least one of certain conditions are met. In the case of foster youth, one of the conditions they can usually meet is that either both the student's parents are deceased, or the student is (or was until age 18) a ward/dependent of the court.

On the FAFSA, question 53, a student should answer "Yes" if he or she is currently a ward/dependent of the court or was a ward/dependent of the court until age 18, or both their parents are dead and they do not have an adoptive parent. If the student parents are dead, but the student has a legal guardian, the student is considered to be an orphan for purposes of completing the FAFSA. One is not considered a ward/dependent of the court based solely on being incarcerated.

Students who meet the requirement to be considered independent never list any parental income, or the income of other relatives such as aunts, uncles grandparents, etc. If married, spousal income must be listed.

The Chafee Grant has different eligibility criteria that are not to be confused with the FAFSA independent student determination. For the tip sheet on completing the FAFSA for Foster youth please go to <http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1100>

If a student is adopted prior to their 18 birthday, can they claim they are/were a Ward of the Court?

No. For federal independent student purposes, age 18 is the key date. Children adopted before that date cannot claim independent status. For the Chafee Grant, if they were ILP eligible between at least one day between their 16th and 18th birthday, they are eligible for Chafee, assuming the other eligibility criteria are met.

What about those youth who are emancipated?

Neither the federal financial aid requirement nor the Chafee requirements address emancipated youth. Therefore, this is simply not considered. Several schools have reported emancipated foster youth who have received Chafee Grants.

If the student is now 19, but was eligible for ILP when they were 16, and were adopted at age 17, do they still list ward of the court?

The student will have to list their new parents' income, but they are not automatically disqualified for a Chafee Grant. Have them fill out the FAFSA, get their GPA certified for the Cal Grant and submit a Chafee Grant and we'll see for what programs they qualify.

Last year, I had a student who was a ward (on probation) who by himself would be financially eligible but the school Financial Aid Office said he had to use his parents' income. Is this right?

For both federal and state financial aid purposes, a student is required to submit their parents' income unless at least one of the following conditions is met.

These conditions are:

1. For the 2004/05 school year, the student was born prior to January 1, 1981.
2. For the 2004/05 school year, the student will be a graduate level student. (MA, MS, Ph.D, etc.)
3. The student is married at the time the application is completed.
4. The student has children or other dependents for whom they contribute at least half of their support.
5. Both of the student's parents are dead, or the student is or was a Ward of the Court until age 18.
6. The student is a veteran of the US armed forces.
7. The college the student will be attending makes a determination that special circumstances exist that warrant not considering the parents' income.

As you can see, living away from one's parents is not a consideration. Also, being claimed on the parents taxes or not is not a consideration. The student only has to meet one of the above conditions to be able to be considered independent of the parents' financial information.

The use of parental income for financial aid eligibility is tied to answering the questions in FAFSA Step Three. This section includes the "Ward of the Court" question. We advise that you talk directly to the Financial Aid Office to be clear on their reasons.

Do you have to complete the FAFSA form to be eligible for the Chafee Grant?

Yes, if the student has a valid Social Security Number. If not, contact Specialized Programs at 1-888-224-7268 option 3 for assistance.

If the student owes the college financial aid office money, should that same office still give the funds of the Chafee grant to the student if they qualify?

Yes, but be aware that students who owe a school money need to pay those debts or face what ever consequences are associated with nonpayment.

In our trainings in the past weren't we told that if you were a ward or dependent of the court between 16-18 you are eligible for full financial aid? Is this true?

Financial aid eligibility is based on the total data completed on the FAFSA, not just that one criterion. Students in that situation usually have financial aid eligibility but all criteria are considered.

Can a student still be attending High School and attending a vocational school too and receive Chafee?

Yes, as long as he/she is attending 1/2 time, maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress and have financial aid eligibility as determined by the vocational school the student is attending.

Last year, you sent out \$5,000 Chafee checks. What if the student only attends for Fall?

Last year, all Chafee funds were disbursed very near the end of the school year. For 2004/05, disbursements will be term specific. Requests for exceptions to this, based on specific circumstances for students who are attending less than a full year should be referred to the Commission for consideration.

For the Chafee program, if the college financial aid office sends you a need analysis showing no need, can they change this report if they get new information after the fact such as special circumstances?

Yes. The financial aid office should submit a paper Needs Analysis Report with the changes.

Can a student receive both federal and state aid through the FAFSA and Chafee Grant if they qualify or are they the same funds?

The FAFSA is just the application for many financial aid programs. Students can and often do get more than one type of financial program. Therefore, many students get federal aid, state and Chafee grants!

If Chafee checks are sent to the school, does the school determine how to spend the money? What if the student's biggest problem is cost of getting to school?

The money is for educational expenses, that can include transportation to and from school.

Are the Scholarship locating websites mentioned in the training free?

Yes.

What is the address for the Community College "I Can Afford College" website?

The address is www.icanaffordcollege.com